

City of Springfield
Work Session Meeting

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION MEETING OF
THE SPRINGFIELD CITY COUNCIL HELD
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2004.

The City of Springfield council met in a work session in the Jesse Maine Meeting Room, 225 Fifth Street, Springfield, Oregon, on Monday, September 20, 2004 at 6:00 p.m., with Mayor Leiken presiding.

ATTENDANCE

Present were Mayor Leiken and Councilors Ballew, Fitch, Ralston, Lundberg and Woodrow. Also present were Assistant City Manager Cynthia Pappas, City Attorney Meg Kieran, City Recorder Amy Sowa and members of the staff.

Mayor Leiken announced that the order of the Work Session would be altered to allow the Willamalane item to go first.

1. City and Willamalane Bike and Pedestrian Projects.

Transportation Manager Nick Arnis presented the staff report on this item. The city and Willamalane apply for funds from state and federal agencies in order to implement their priority bike and pedestrian projects. Staffs from the city and Willamalane seek input from council about the priority project lists.

The city and Willamalane have adopted plans to guide planning and constructing of on and off street bike and pedestrian facilities. The Springfield Bicycle Plan was adopted in June 1998. The Plan consists of a 20-year list of bike and multi-use projects as well as goals, policies, implementation strategies, and design practices. When TransPlan was adopted in 2001, it included the bike project list from the Springfield Bike Plan. In addition, TransPlan contains a map and list of Priority Bikeway Projects that must be implemented to meet one of the alternative performance measures to comply with the TPR. In March 2004, Willamalane completed the Park and Recreation Comprehensive Plan that includes a list of off-street bike and pedestrian projects. The Willamalane Plan coordinated with the Springfield and TransPlan bike and pedestrian projects.

City and Willamalane staffs periodically apply for funds primarily from state and federal agencies to plan and construct bicycle and pedestrian projects. Projects that are eligible to utilize these grants and funds are taken from the existing plans. The two staffs have created a short list of priority on and off street bicycle projects that are good candidates for different sources of funding. This list and an internal process for reviewing grant opportunities are presented in the Council Briefing Memorandum.

Mr. Arnis introduced Rebecca Gershow from Willamalane Parks and Recreation. Ms. Gershow was present for questions from council regarding off-street bike paths.

Mr. Arnis said that the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) is planning an overlay project in Glenwood and also along Main Street from 21st Street to South A. As part of this project, they will include adding bike lanes along Main Street. Existing parking will not be affected along this section of town. He discussed other bike lane projects between Springfield and Eugene.

Mr. Arnis said that over the years, Willamalane and the city have applied for striping projects and grants from the state and have been successful in receiving those grants. They have also received federal money for other bike path projects. He referred to a priority list included in the agenda packet as Attachment A, pages 3 and 4. Staff will notify council in a Communication Packet as they apply for grants for some of the projects from this list. The focus of tonight's meeting is to get council's input and comments regarding the bike project list and the process involved. If staff received the projects and the money, they would come back to council with the intergovernmental agreement to move forward.

Councilor Ralston said he was happy to hear ODOT was planning the bike path along this section of Main Street. It has been a very dangerous part of the road. He would like to see connectivity between the bike paths, rather than random bike paths. He noted several paths that do not currently connect.

Mr. Arnis said they could look at extending some existing paths.

Councilor Ballew said they all look like good projects. If there is an employment need for people riding their bikes to work, that should take priority over recreational trails. She asked how many bike paths run outside city limits.

Mr. Arnis said the bike paths on South GameFarm Road and on the 31st Street run outside of city limits. He said they would be talking to the county about assisting with those projects.

Councilor Woodrow asked about the bike path near Franklin Boulevard. He asked if there was a plan to connect the Millrace with the path along Franklin Boulevard.

Mr. Arnis said there is an on-street bike lane on the bridge currently which runs east. The difficulty would be in connecting it through South A and Main and getting it on the other bridge running west.

Councilor Woodrow asked if there were plans in putting bike lanes in the area north of Gateway and near International Way.

Mr. Arnis said the county is putting in bike lanes on North GameFarm Road. The I-5 Beltline project includes a bike/pedestrian bridge that crosses I-5 from the Gateway Mall to the Eugene side in the first phase.

Ms. Pappas said the map only shows the priority projects, not the bike routes that are already in place. The connectivity is not shown between what is there and what is planned.

Councilor Lundberg asked if the TransPlan map was more complete showing all bike paths already in place as well as those proposed.

Ms. Pappas said staff could supply that map to council.

Councilor Lundberg asked if the 31st Street and GameFarm Road bike projects were in the Willamalane District.

Ms. Gershow said the on-street bicycle systems belong to the city, not Willamalane. Willamalane will often write letters of support for those routes, especially if they connect to one of their park systems.

Councilor Lundberg discussed two areas that should be considered. The first is to look at a way to get from Wayside Loop to the Sacred Heart site. Another place to consider is access off and on I-105, Pioneer Parkway and Q Street. She discussed connecting the bike path with Laura Street. There are so many different ways traffic is traveling in this area. She said there is a wonderful bike path along Pioneer Parkway, but there is one enormous intersection that can be quite dangerous. She offered some suggestions to make it more accessible for bicyclists and pedestrians. When looking at those intersections, it is important to look at ways to get bikes and pedestrians across. She discussed a bridge that goes over I-5 and causes bikers to enter neighborhoods rather than staying on the main road. She is happy to see there is a lot being done to accommodate bike access.

Councilor Ballew asked if these projects required a change to the TransPlan.

Mr. Arnis said it did not.

Mayor Leiken asked about the Moe Mountain area. It is currently undeveloped. It is a neighborhood and could allow passage between two of our major bike paths. He asked about South Game Farm Road and if it would be blocked when the MLK Parkway is built.

Mr. Arnis said it would be closed for vehicles, but open for bikes and pedestrian.

Mayor Leiken said it is important to have clear signage for bikers so they know where vehicles will and will not be. These are good projects and a good plan for something we can see in the future.

Mr. Arnis said he noted council's suggestions and comments. Staff will send a Communication Packet to council when opportunities for grant programs arise from the state and federal government that the city will be applying for.

Mayor Leiken asked when these projects would be brought to United Front.

Ms. Pappas said they would be bringing it back to the United Front next year.

2. Highway 126 Expressway Plan.

Transportation Manager Nick Arnis presented the staff report on this item. The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) has begun an Expressway Management Plan (EMP) for Highway 126 from I-5 to Main Street. The plan will last approximately two years and includes current conditions analysis, assessment of short term solutions, and more in-depth design concepts for specific intersections. The study will be adopted as part of TransPlan and/or the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and by the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC).

ODOT Region 2 staff must complete an EMP for Highway 126 from I-5 to Main Street. This section of highway was designated an Expressway classification by the OTC about four years ago and at that time the OTC directed ODOT staff to initiate a study and assessment of the highway in order to bring it up to Expressway standards. ODOT has begun this study and is holding monthly meetings with city and county staff. In general the study consists of three phases of work: 1) data collection and analysis of current conditions, 2) alternative analysis of the at-grade section of Highway 126 (52nd Street to Main Street), and 3) an alternative analysis of the remaining segment of highway from I-5 to 52nd Street, or the grade separated section. The focus for the next two years will be on phases 1 and 2. A stakeholder advisory committee will be formed consisting of public and private interests and city officials. Ultimately the plan will be adopted locally in TransPlan or/and the metro RTP as a refinement plan, and adopted by the OTC. ODOT officials will be present at the work session to present material contained in the attachment and seek comments from council about the Expressway Plan.

Mr. Arnis introduced Tom Boyatt, planner from ODOT, who would be presenting information on this item.

Mr. Boyatt said he appreciated the opportunity to update council on this facility planning process. He summed up the designation of Highway 126 as an EMP in 2000 and the city's reluctance to approve that designation. Expressway is a state designation applied to national highway systems statewide where the condition is or can be an expressway condition. He referred to Attachment A included in the agenda packet which included a description of the purpose of Expressways. The intent of Expressways is to primarily serve the through traffic (interurban traffic), but there is also a balancing of serving the intraurban traffic. The balance is to look at ways to serve adjacent property. In looking at the refinement planning process, it is the way to plan for the Expressway facility. There are two large at-grade intersections along this highway. In order to upgrade those intersections, they must go through the planning process. They would like to get to a preferred alternative for the at-grade intersections through phases I and II, caretake their mobilities so they can still maintain the through function of the facility and also improve safety and operations along the way. It is the kind of system planning effort such as that on the Beltline Highway in Eugene.

Mr. Boyatt said the project is under the oversight of a project management team. The team includes Nick Arnis and Gary McKenney from Springfield, Tom Stinchfield and Mike Russell from Lane County, and traffic analysis staff, Mr. Boyatt and planning from ODOT. The contractors include Jay McCrae with CH2M Hill, Kittleson and Associates, and Jeannie Lawson and Associates. There are others under contract to supplement their needs. The outline was also included in the agenda packet. They are finishing up phase I of the process. They do have a base line and the no build condition. The no build condition does assume all of the projects that are

programmed in the city's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) that affect the corridor, the county's CIP that affect the corridor and the 2004-2007 statewide Transportation Improvement Program. It is not exactly no build, but does not include projects that may be in TransPlan or the constrained list, but have not yet been funded. They are beginning to scope phase II, which is the public process. They have a list of interviews scheduled to help craft the tone and the general procedure for phase II. It will be a balance of need. The project goals, included in the agenda packet, attempt to address the balance.

Mr. Boyatt distributed paper copies of maps of the Expressway. The first was the Existing Traffic Operations (2004) and the second the Future 2025 Traffic Operations. He explained the maps. The key is to get out in front of the congestion at Highway 126 and Main Street. They are working on modeling how that intersection would work. He referred to the 2025 map, which denoted the peak hour operating condition in the afternoon; therefore the eastbound traffic is much more congested. They may eventually look at the morning commute in the future, but for now the most use of the system happens on the commute in the afternoon. He explained different locations and their volume capacity. Some of the intersections are challenged with their capacity.

Mr. Boyatt said that through this process, they would like to find a plan that would guide future developments in these areas and develop interchange management plans based on need. They would like to phase in and maintain the desired Expressway condition over time. They are going to a web based product in a Geographic Information System (GIS) format that could be put on the city's, the county's and ODOT's website. This could be interactive to the public and updated regularly.

Mr. Boyatt said the goal with phase II is to have a recommendation before the City Council, the Lane County Board and the Oregon Transportation Commission approving what would be called the Interchange Area Management Plans for the area of 52nd Street and Highway 126, and McKenzie Highway/Main Street and Highway 126. The process would involve a Planning Commission process with both governments and council action. The action would be to adopt the Refinement Plan as it relates to the TransPlan.

Councilor Ralston said ODOT has rules regarding the spacing of exits. He asked if it was true that Expressways are more restrictive on creating offramps and if that was one of the city's objections.

Mr. Boyatt said the urban spacing standard would be the same. What is restricted are that the interchanges are closer together than current law allows.

Mr. Arnis explained the local interchanges to neighborhoods.

Councilor Ralston said he lives off Olympic Street. He discussed the intersections at Mohawk and 18th Street and 42nd Street offramp. He said there is a point where the offramp from 126 East is only about 25 yards from Olympic Street. He discussed the delays. He proposed looking at a switchback, an extra lane that could switchback to Olympic Street. People could use this switchback instead of Mohawk. Large trucks often impede traffic at this intersection. The switchback could be cost effective.

Mr. Boyatt said it is an interesting suggestion. When ODOT gets into alternative evaluations for 42nd Street, which is part of phase III, he would like to bring Councilor Ralston into the stakeholders working group with this suggestion. He asked Councilor Ralston if it would be a traffic signal or stop sign.

Councilor Ralston said it could just be a stop sign with a right turn only. Discussion was held regarding traffic turning right or left.

Mr. Arnis discussed this option and the congestion in that area. He has carried this idea to the group in the past and will continue to do so.

Mr. Boyatt said when this goes through analysis, the key will be the projected influence of adding that to the mainline operations. They would determine the queue and safety issues. They are looking at the at-grade intersections first.

Councilor Woodrow asked if they would consider widening the intersection or building a flyover at the Highway 126 and Main Street intersection because of the growth from 58th to 72nd Streets and the number of cars that will be traveling along that section.

Mr. Boyatt said they will be looking at those options. The current recommendation in the technical work by Kittleson on the future no build, states that to operate at that location there needs to be three lanes in each direction, plus other turning lanes. There is a strong recognition that this is a large intersection.

Mr. Arnis discussed the next phase of the Jasper Road Extension and the portions that would be the city's responsibility. Having this plan will allow phasing in the projects. He is trying to work on the next phase piece of this project to relieve congestion. This is a major project for the city.

Mayor Leiken referred to the map of the Future 2025 Traffic chart. The Mohawk intersection is failing and the 42nd Street intersection is failing. He asked if it was a federal issue regarding length between intersections.

Mr. Boyatt said it is federally driven, but accepted by ODOT.

Mayor Leiken asked if ODOT considers land use issues when looking at intersections that are failing.

Mr. Boyatt said ODOT relies on Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) network modeling and projections. When that model is developed, they assign these transportation analysis zones and then pick the average for trip generation based on the planned land use. They apply that out to the network. It is not a refined tool, but is the tool they have. Within the city limits, it is slightly different than within the UGB.

Mayor Leiken said in looking at how to project things, it is important to look at land use. He referred to the new Federal Armory going in off of Mohawk and the increased traffic that will

create. There is sixty acres of campus industrial that could also be developed. He asked if ODOT could make exceptions because of the planned growth in these areas. He asked how we plan ahead to solve the problems. He has always appreciated working with Mr. Boyatt and Jeff Shieke from the Salem office. Governor Kulongoski has stated that Springfield is one of the hottest development areas along the I-5 corridor between Portland and Medford. Exceptions have to be considered for any area in Oregon that is planning such growth. He discussed the intersection at Main Street and that it will continue to grow. Springfield is working at a faster pace than ODOT. He asked Mr. Arnis how much money was in the West Eugene Parkway (WEP) project.

Mr. Boyatt said there is \$17M programmed for that project.

Mayor Leiken asked how that \$17M could be kept in the Eugene/Springfield area if WEP cannot be built. Springfield's council is on the same page on most items. They are trying to move the community forward and hope to leave it better than when they started.

Mr. Boyatt said he shares the frustration that the development is ahead of the transportation infrastructure. Infrastructure is extremely expensive and there are significant impacts. The state's perspective is to keep the traffic moving. There are alternative sets that can be considered. They have been able to add collector streets without damaging the rest of the system. He gave an example of utilizing other lanes. All alternatives will be considered.

Mayor Leiken asked how Councilor Ralston's idea could be heard. It is common sense. He asked how it could get to a level where it could be studied.

Mr. Boyatt said it comes down to a question of priority setting. ODOT looks at the traffic numbers for each system. One area where they all sit together as the MPC staff to discuss priorities is in the beginning of looking at projects. With the work being scheduled and the Beltline intersection, there have been significant challenges. He acknowledged their ideas and suggestions, and will continue to bring them back to his division. Planning dollars are very limited.

Councilor Lundberg said they have brought the interchange idea forward for Glenwood because they have kept on top of what has been going on and were able to advocate. It is important that staff continues to keep council aware of what is happening.

Mr. Boyatt said they would continue to give council updates on this process.

Councilor Woodrow discussed the option of offramps at 28th Street and alleviating traffic.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:04 pm.

Minutes Recorder – Amy Sowa

Sidney W. Leiken
Mayor

Attest:

Amy Sowa
City Recorder